Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.chrc-ccdp.ca

Resources

News Room

News Releases

2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 | 2001 | 2000

26/05/2003

Commission Announces Steps To Improve Dispute Resolution

Ottawa, May 26, 2003 – The Canadian Human Rights Commission today announced steps to significantly improve resolution of human rights disputes consistent with the Canadian Human Rights Act.

"The Commission will expand alternative dispute resolution (ADR) so that cases will be settled as fairly, respectfully, quickly, and efficiently as possible," said Chief Commissioner Mary Gusella. "ADR enhances human dignity. Often, it can help restore relationships and promote healing in the workplace."

ADR is a non-adversarial way of resolving disputes that is being increasingly used in the public and private sectors, and the most common form of it is mediation. In 1999, the Commission launched a pilot mediation program and in 2002, 64 per cent of the cases that went to mediation were mediated successfully. The pilot project demonstrated that ADR can quickly put an end to a conflict by generating innovative and adapted solutions which meet the needs of all parties, including the Commission's.

The Commission is now offering ADR at all stages of the complaint process. Previously, it was only available at the initial stage or just before the case went to Tribunal.

The Commission created a new branch – the Alternative Dispute Resolution Services Branch – in February 2003 to manage the expanded role of ADR. The branch will provide professional and experienced mediators and encourage complainants and respondents to consider ADR. In addition, the branch will operate independently to ensure its impartiality.

The Commission has also created an Advisory Council of eminent jurists and ADR specialists to give advice on how to use ADR as effectively as possible in the context of human rights and the public interest. The members include: former Supreme Court justice Gérard La Forest of Fredericton, former Supreme Court justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé of Quebec City, former chief justice of Ontario Charles Dubin of Toronto, and former Alberta Court of Appeal judge Roger Kerans of Victoria.

Backgrounder: Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Canadian Human Rights Commission

2008-02312/

Last Updated: 2004-02-27